Wilmington District News

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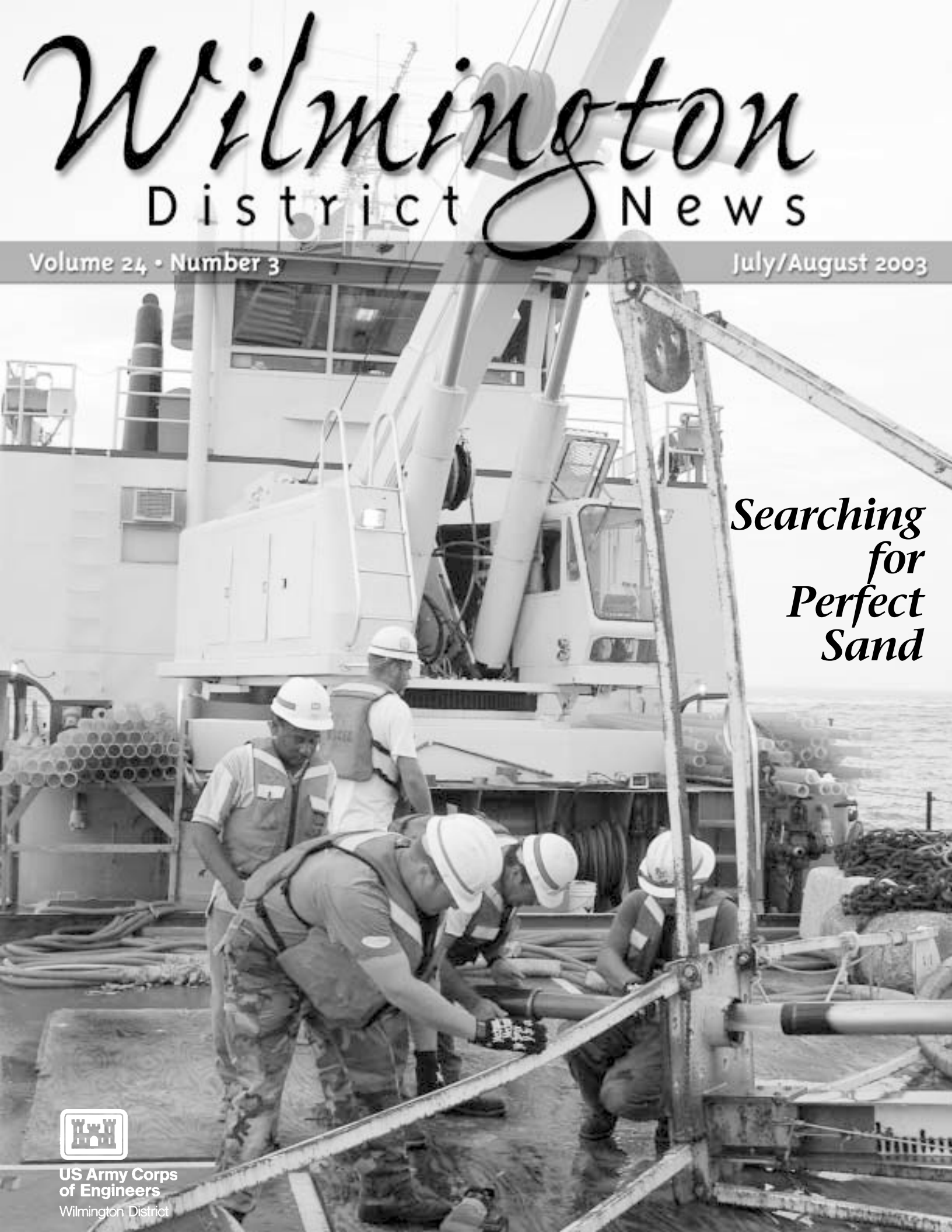

Searching for Perfect Sand

US Army Corps of Engineers
Wilmington District

Wilmington District News

Volume 24, Number 3
July/August 2003

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Inside This Issue

On the Cover:
Larry Benjamin and Tim Feith (standing) and Lee Willis, Donald Fulcher and Lester Gaughf prepare a tube of sand during a core sampling mission on board the Snell.

Up Front: Just Do It!!

Located in my wallet, right next to my Army Values Card, is my Permission Slip from the Chief, LTG Robert B. Flowers. I know we are all familiar with the Chief's permission slip which lists three questions to ask yourself:
1. Is it good for my customer?
2. Is it legal and ethical?
3. Is it something I am willing to be accountable for?

If you can answer yes to all three then you have permission..."Just Do it".

My recent deployment to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom let me witness first hand Corps employees "Just Doing It". This "just do it" attitude or initiative demonstrated by Corps Team members was what made the difference in a demanding environment. We had Corps Team members coordinating the trash removal for a city of over five million, designing a training program for the Baghdad police academy, and coordinating a work force to improve irrigation throughout Iraq. This initiative demonstrated by so many Corps Team members is one of 21 qualities of a leader that John C. Maxwell lists in his book "The 21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader". It is this display of initiative that makes Wilmington such a successful district. This success is a direct result of Team members, leaders at all levels, demonstrating initiative to improve the workplace, a process, or satisfy a customer.

As we approach the end of another fiscal year we are faced with many challenges; outsourcing, Corps reform and reduced budgets. To meet these challenges leaders at all levels must be ready to look for opportunities and take action...do the things they believe ought to be done, whether it is instituting a recycling program, or devising a solution to deliver a project to a customer on time. Remember what Conrad Hilton once said: "Success seems to be connected with action. Successful people keep moving. They make mistakes, but they don't quit."

I cannot close without a special thanks to TEAM SAW. I was truly overwhelmed by the amount of support the district provided to fellow team members serving in Kuwait and Iraq. Whether it was preparing volunteers to deploy, sending care packages, or picking up the extra workload left behind by a deployed TEAM member, this support provided by everyone was a source of pride for me.

– ESSAYONS, MAJ Randy Powell
Deputy Commander

Wilmington District and North Carolina Launch Ecosystem Enhancement Program

North Carolina is the eighth fastest growing state in the Union, according to the 2000 Census. That growth is largely based the attractions of the state's beautiful natural environments. It includes one of the largest road-building and improvement programs in the nation.

An important measure to ensure that improved roads go hand in hand with healthy environments took place with the July 22, 2003, signing of a Memorandum of Agreement to establish the Ecosystem Enhancement Program (EEP). Signers included North Carolina's Department of Transportation (NC DOT) and Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the US Army Corps of Engineers.

"The goal is to protect and enhance North Carolina's ecosystem – that incredibly valuable asset upon which we all ultimately depend for our health, prosperity and happiness," DENR Secretary Bill Ross said.

The Ecosystem Enhancement Program promises to become a model for other states and Corps districts as they implement regulatory programs around the nation. Why? The program ensures that environmental mitigations are conducted in the watersheds that will be impacted by development. It ensures that impacted functions are replaced by mitigations that provide the same functions in the watershed. And the EEP will provide mitigation in advance of impacts, which will not only do a better job of protecting the environment, it will also smooth the process of completing projects.

The signing ceremony was held at the site of the Buffalo Creek Watershed Project in Greensboro, North Carolina. The project will restore 5,434 linear feet of stream in the 10-square-mile area of Hillsdale Park. Features of the project include:

- Restoring the eroding stream to natural, stable conditions.
- Improving floodplain functions and floodwater storage.
- Restoring vegetation, including tree cover that will shade the aquatic habitat of the stream.
- Re-introducing pool and riffle flow features to the channel to improve water quality and habitat.

Like other EEP projects, the Buffalo Creek watershed restoration will provide mitigation credits for much-needed transportation improvements – in this case the Greensboro Outer Loop.

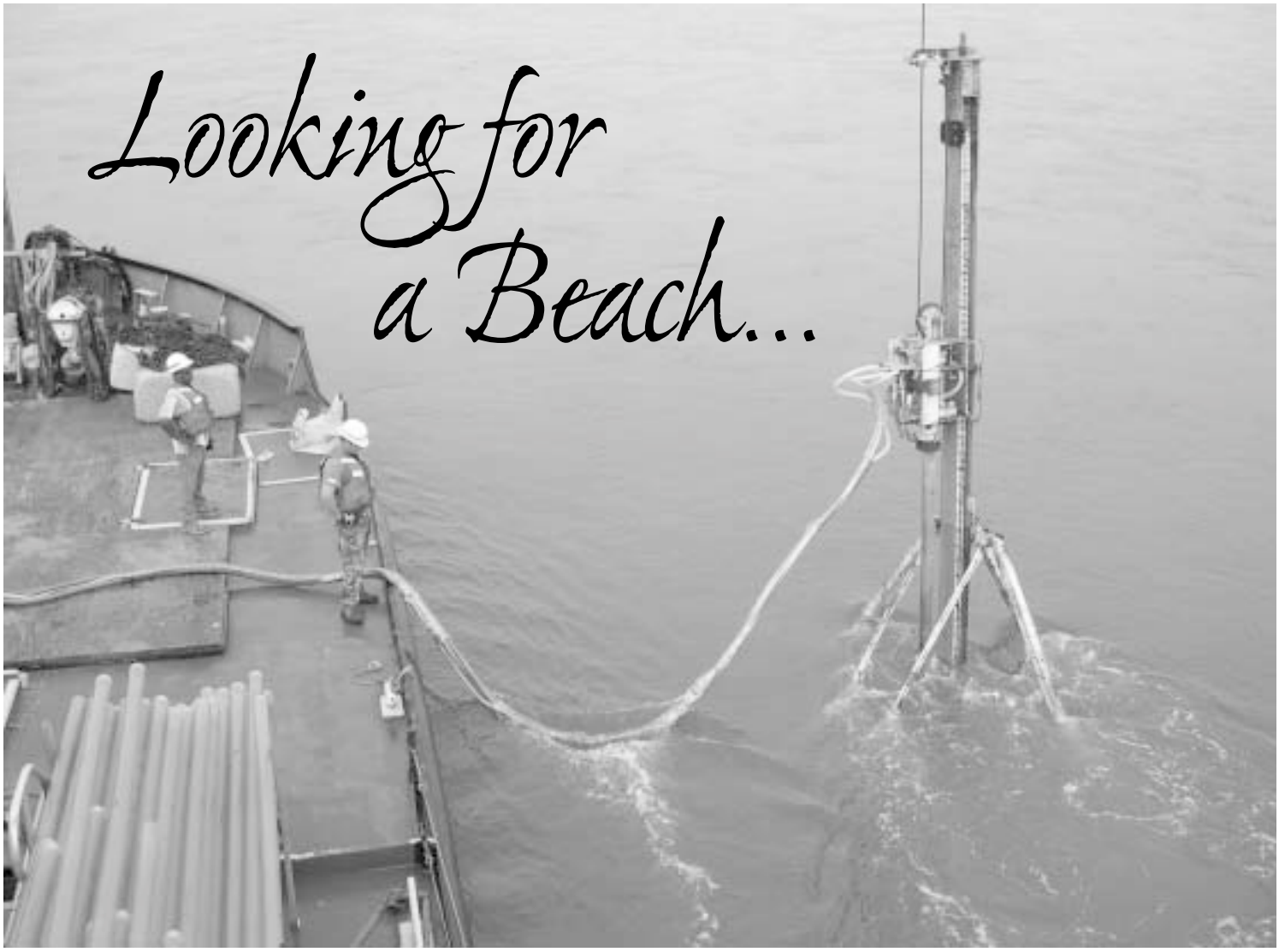
Wilmington District Commander COL Ray Alexander, in his remarks at the signing ceremony, highlighted the many ways this program embodies The US Army Corps of Engineers Seven Environmental Operating Principles.

- **Strive to achieve environmental sustainability:** The EEP specifically aims to maintain excellent conditions in watersheds over the long term. It ensures that important watershed functions are maintained and replaced by like functions whenever there is any disturbance within the watershed.

North Carolina Secretary of Environment & Natural Resources Bill Ross, COL Ray Alexander, and North Carolina Secretary of Transportation Lyndo Tippett sign the Memorandum of Agreement establishing the Ecosystem Enhancement Program.

- **Recognize the interdependence of life and the physical environment.** Proactively consider environmental consequences. Certainly the EEP is a process that allows us to look ahead and plan ahead for a healthier environmental future. In a rapidly growing economy like North Carolina's, the human environment is important – but allowing degradation of the natural environment would defeat quality of life goals for every human and natural community in the state.
- **Seek balance and synergy among human development activities and natural systems by designing economic and environmental solutions that support and reinforce one another.** Again, the Ecosystem Enhancement Program helps to keep both the beauty and the growth working for the good of all.
- **Continue to accept corporate responsibility and accountability.** This memorandum of agreement demonstrates the high level of mutual accountability both the Corps and our State Partners are committed to meet.
- **Seek ways and means to assess and mitigate cumulative impacts.** EEP is specifically designed to look at what is happening within entire watersheds and ecosystems. It is the kind of approach we are working hard to advance across our nation.
- **Build and share integrated scientific, economic and social knowledge.** The EEP is an outgrowth of shared efforts among North Carolina agencies and the Corps that have been ongoing for more than five years. We hope to see our shared experience continue to yield benefits.
- **Respect the views of individuals and groups interested in Corps activities, listen to them actively, and learn from their perspective in the search to find innovative win-win solutions to the nation's problems that also protect and enhance the environment.** This principle describes very well the process that has made development of the Ecosystem Enhancement Program possible.

Looking for a Beach...



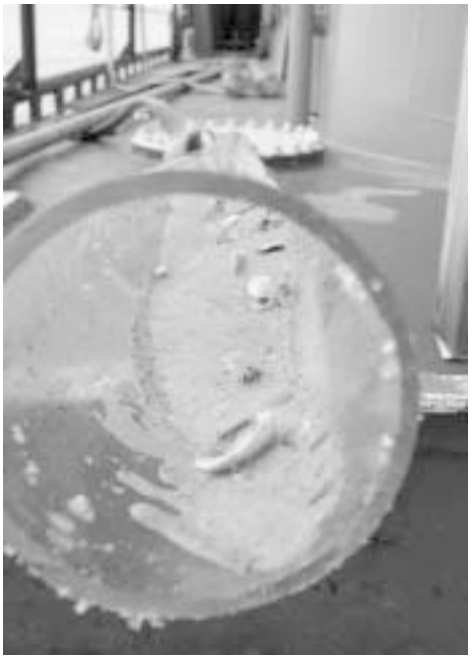
Larry Benjamin and Lee Willis stand by on the bow of the Snell as the vibracore burrows into the ocean floor.

Tourism and beachfront property mean big bucks in North Carolina, and people flock to this state to take advantage of its beautiful, hypnotic beaches. Part of the lure of those beaches is something that's often taken for granted: the quality and availability of sand.

Finding good sand is a specialty of the Army Corps of Engineers Wilmington District. It's a tedious, labor-intensive process, but the payoff is huge for the district's stakeholders of local government and property owners who depend on the continuing flow of tourists, and who need additional sand for shore protection and for overall aesthetics. Playing a big role in the quest for sand is the Snell, the district's multi-purpose debris removal vessel. But debris isn't what the Snell is after in this mission. It's working with the GeoTechnical and Environmental Remediation Section (GeoTech) to search for pockets of potentially usable sand off Topsail Island for a shore protection project. With navigation devices such as Global Positioning System (GPS), the Snell meanders to numerous satellite-pinpointed areas. Folks from GeoTech think these might be good areas from which to get sand core samples. What GeoTech wants is fine-grained sand that will bleach well when it's exposed to the sun.

"The sand is like the type that children play in," says technician Larry Benjamin of GeoTech. "And we're trying to find out how much sand we can put on the beaches."

Up on the bridge Captain Billy Cuthrell positions the Snell for the first of dozens of jobs throughout the day averaging about half an hour per stop. His crew members are well trained to assist Larry and fellow Geo Tech technician Diane Greene. The first stop of the day is in semi-rough waters about 100 meters offshore of the southeast-



This core sample will be evaluated later to see if it's worthy enough to be put on local beaches.

ern end of Topsail Island. When the exact location is found Captain Billy drops two pole-like fixtures from both ends of the Snell that act as brakes. Crane operator Lester Gaughf, a former Marine who honed his trade while in the Marine Corps, hoists a device known as a vibracore over the bow into about 15 feet of water. In a series of short bursts the vibracore works its way through unspoiled sediment with high frequency, low amplitude vibration. A plastic tube is inside the device to collect the sample for later logging and analysis. Once the sample is collected it's brought back onto the bow. Larry and the Snell crew separate the plastic tube that contains the core sample from the vibracore, cut a three to four-foot section of it, mark it, and log such details as from where the sample was found, at what depth, and its GPS location. Eventually the contents of each tube will be analyzed to determine which area has the greatest amount of usable sand.

Over a loudspeaker, Captain Billy Cuthrell alerts the crew to prepare for the next location. He looks at his GPS readout of the Snell's location that's represented by a blue circle on his computer monitor and the vessel's on its way again.

"It's like playing a video game all day long," he says with a grin. "I put the blue circle in the red circle."

Cuthrell says teamwork on the Snell is vital. He and nearly all of his crew have served in the military, which means they have built in team-player skills to get the job done. Gaughf has been on the Snell for seven years and still relies on things he learned while in the Marine Corp.

"Oh yeah, it takes everybody on here to do their part and it depends on what job we're doin'," he says, "how many it takes and what each person has to do."

The Snell is an office, home and in some cases, recreation area. If time allows after a long day of work at a remote location the crew will grab a fishing pole and see if they can catch their dinner.

"You might be in an office with somebody for eight hours a day," says Captain Billy. "Try 24 hours a day."

The clock is ticking and there's still more work to be done before calling it a day. The sun is beating down on the crew as it brings up and prepares another core sample, but they continue on, catching some time and taking advantage of the vessel's air conditioning system. It's hard work, but the crew members say they wouldn't trade their jobs for anything. Today it's core sampling, but tomorrow might be back to debris removal.

"My office moves every day," says Gaughf. "Who wouldn't enjoy different changes of scenery?"

– Story and Photos by Hank Heusinkveld

Top Right: Diane Greene inputs core sample data while Snell Captain Billy Cuthrell keeps a watchful eye on his vessel's course in shallow water.

Bottom Right: Larry Benjamin and Tim Feith check the composition of this sample, one of several they'll gather on this mission.

Corps Gains High Praise in EPA Facilities Clean-Up

When the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) built and relocated to its new facilities in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, it needed to leave its former workspaces in clean condition. For a major center working on air pollution research and regulation, this was not as easy as sweeping the floors and turning in the keys.

Three leased properties required a specialized cleanup process known as an Environmental Due Diligence Process (EDDP). The EDDP assesses environmental conditions and minimizes or eliminates environmental risks or liabilities to the EPA when properties are returned to their owners.

In this case, the EPA was about to undertake the largest EDDP effort in its history. It included:

- Environmental Research Center (ERC) with more than 250,000 square feet of mixed laboratory space on 42 acres;
- ERC Annex, over 150,000 square feet or mixed laboratory space on 21 acres;
- Emissions Measurement Laboratory, over 9,000 square feet on 22 acres.
- Closeout of a RCRA research, development, and demonstration permit;
- Radioactive decontamination and decommissioning for unrestricted use in accordance with the radioactive materials license and Nuclear Regulatory Commission guidance.

The project stakeholders included:

- Three EPA laboratory organizations
- EPA Office of Administration and Real Estate Management
- Three property management companies, attorneys and environmental consultants
- Multiple offices of the NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources
- Nuclear Regulatory Commission
- Booz-Allen (EPA's technical consultant)

A worker cleans a research combustor before decommission.

The EPA turned to the US Army Corps of Engineers for assistance in completing this major cleanup effort. The Corps' task was to complete this task in a professional, cost effective, and timely manner.

> ***"The ability of this organization to meet deadlines was just unreal."***

When all was done, the EPA project manager, Russ Kulp said: "I would do this project with this district again, anywhere, anytime. The ability of this organization to meet deadlines was just unreal. We saved the government millions of dollars."

The Corps project delivery team, headed up by Bob Keistler of the Wilmington District, included Phil Payonk, Erica McCormick, Scott Williams, also of Wilmington. Other team members participated from Savannah, Kansas City, Baltimore, and Philadelphia Districts, making the project a true 'virtual team' from across the Corps. Team members moved across discipline, district, and division boundaries without difficulty. They represented the Corps experience and promise, as both seasoned professionals and members with less than one year's prior experience participated.

The team used its division's Total Environmental Restoration Contract (TERC) as the project's primary contracting tool. Shaw Environmental, Inc., the TERC Contractor, was a close partner. The TERC Team Concept allowed favorable and cost effective sequencing of work, streamlined coordination, eliminated duplication of effort, and reduced liability. The project team used existing environmental delivery order contracts to obtain other needed services.

In brief, the main accomplishments under the project were:

- Carried out the project with an effective, fully corporate, project delivery team.
- Completed EDDP for two leased properties (ERC Annex and EML) 4 months and 21 months, respectively, ahead of schedule resulting

in a lease payment savings to EPA of $800,000.
- Completed EDDP for the ERC before lease expired in July 2003, avoiding potential additional lease costs of $3,750,000.
- Developed a risk-based screening approach to verify decontamination process of laboratory work surfaces.
- Implemented a quality system that ensured defensible products.
- Effectively managed budget and schedule allowing EDDP to be under budget and ahead of schedule.

The skills and techniques employed in the EDDP here are highly adaptable to many environmental projects. As EPA project manager Kulp expressed it, "we ran into situations where there was no guidance, and the Corps and their contractor invented processes needed to get the job done."

Four examples of specific technical issues associated with the EPA EDDP project included:

Development of Risk Screening Approach for Laboratory Surfaces. No promulgated regulation or guidance existed to determine safe levels of chemicals that can remain on laboratory working surfaces. A teamwork group from the Corps, its contractors, and other stakeholders, developed a risk-based screening approach for contact surfaces using existing EPA guidance regarding ingestion and dermal absorption. The approach was effectively used in this project and is being presented for wider adoption within the appropriate scientific communities.

RCRA Permit Closure. The State of North Carolina required equipment and plant to be decontaminated to less than detectable levels for all potential contaminants in rinsate samples. This was a virtually impossible goal. Instead, the team negotiated with the State regulatory agency to use Region 9 Preliminary Remediation Goal or Reporting Limits for comparisons. This yielded an order of magnitude difference in clean criteria, yet resulted in an environmentally safe outcome.

Quality Assurance (QA) Field Splits. Traditionally, data from QA known as field splits, which are samples sent to a independent lab, are not received in time to use that data in report preparation or decision making. The EDDP team solved the problem by implementing intensive coordination between the QA lab and the primary contractor and requiring performance from the QA lab. QA data was placed on the same delivery schedule as the primary data, validated at the same time, and used in the decision processes.

Radiological Survey: The team conducted a stie characterization and final status survey for the EPA laboratory facilities. The team took approximately 25,000 smaples and measurements on an extremely compressed schedule. As a result, the EPA received an unrestricted release from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in time to vacate a lease before the a scheduled six-month renewal that could have cost the agency as much as $3,750,000.

In addition to these major technical challenges, the contractor and the team carried out a literally heroic amount of backbreaking work, including removal of all wooden laboratory countertops that could have absorbed toxic material, complete cleanout of 1,000 sink traps, excavation and disposal of tons of potentially contaminated soil, wipe-down of walls, and steam cleaning duct systems.

The EPA Project Manager summed up the great experience delivered by the team when he said "the phrase 'One Door to the Corps' gained real meaning as I realized my delivery team actually came from three different districts and had augmentation from divisions and labs. I never was aware of anything but ONE team working on our project."

The statement proves out in fact, as the Corps has been asked to take on other similar projects by the EPA as a result of this project's outstanding successes.

– By Penny Schmitt

District members and their EPA partners share some down time at Empie Park.

Small Aquatic Ecosystem Restorations Make Big Impact

Scattered across the Nation, many U.S. Army Corps of Engineers environmental projects make a big impact. Key sites are being restored every day, adding to the preservation and protection of flora and fauna in areas ranging from the once-choking Anacostia River in Washington, D.C., to the green area known as the Bosque in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

In the Outer Banks towns of Wanchese and Manteo, two relatively small restoration projects make up a vital part of that big picture.

Projects like Wanchese and Festival Park are proof that sound science and time can counter the effects of humans and Mother Nature.

"We identified Wanchese because its marshes were eroding, and there was a need for both ecosystem restoration and protection for Wanchese Harbor," explains Chuck Wilson of Environmental Resources. "If the marshes erode, that opens the area to storm damage. So, it was a good opportunity."

The on-going plan is to develop a rock construction barrier as a dredged material containment feature that will hold at least seven acres of dredged material from the nearby Island H Project.

"The area will be graded to provide creek and marsh habitat. Elevations will be constructed so that open water areas will function as primary nursery. Those open water areas will be buffered by low marsh species of grass."

And that's good news for local fisherman. Wilson says the marsh grasses provide habitat for early life stages of animals like shrimp and crabs. The remaining portion of the fragile, disappearing system that has managed to survive will have a simple, yet sturdy, barrier to protect it from Mother Nature and wake erosion from passing watercraft. Contractors are building a stone dike and sandbag wall that will hold dredged material from a nearby project.

This shoreline in Wanchese Harbor has been eroding naturally over the years and from constant boat wakes.

This area of marsh will eventually extend out to the dike that's now under construction in Wanchese Harbor.

"It's fairly simple work," says Project Manager Tom Gibison of Construction. "The dike is made by placing limestone bedding material on a geotextile fabric which helps in structural stability of the dike. The fabric is then wrapped over the limestone material. The limestone and fabric also protects against leakage from dredged material leaving the dike area. We then put armor stone on top of all that to protect against wave activity."

While Gibison normally looks at this project from a construction point of view, he's been able to envision the end result – a flush, thriving aquatic ecosystem in a few years.

"I couldn't really picture it when we started, but now that a lot of rocks are in place I can really see what this thing's going to look like."

In nearby Manteo the marsh perimeter of Festival Park, which was constructed under Section 206 Ecosystem Restoration, is making a strong recovery. It,

too, faced wind and boat wake. The solution was a rock barrier similar to the one at the Wanchese project.

"At Festival Park we looked at a total aquatic ecosystem approach that went from those lower water areas to the maritime forest," Wilson says. "Hurricanes and salt spray had damaged trees in the adjacent forest. The forest should normally help provide buffering for water flowing from the upland area out into the marsh."

Wilson says the dead trees were cut and cleared from the site, and new species have replaced some of the pines that had been lost. They included Atlantic White Cedar, an important wetlands species that historically has been used for boat building.

Wilson likes what he sees as he makes intermittent checks throughout the year. He says recovery is a slow process, but this Army Corps of Engineers project is working.

"Already you can see shrimp and juvenile fish in the open water area. This project also included an oyster restoration component, a one-acre oyster reef that was built just off shore of the site. We used some oyster shells within the project area between the open water area in the fill to make an additional stabilization of the toe of that material, and we have already been seeing some oysters in that area."

Projects like Wanchese and Festival Park are proof that sound science and time can counter the effects of humans and Mother Nature. And although these projects are small they're pieces of a much larger, complex puzzle necessary for the preservation of fragile ecosystems.

– Story and photos by Hank Heusinkveld

At Festival Park boat wakes have been dramatically reduced thanks to this simple dike design.

Project Manager Tom Gibison, right, and Bill Dennis, center, discuss the daily construction plan with a contractor.

In Their Own Words – SAW FEST Reflects on Operation Iraqi Freedom

Tara Williams, far right, poses with new found friends she met in Baghdad.

Now that our Forward Engineer Support Team has had time to decompress after its adventurous, yet sometimes dangerous, time in the Middle East they've taken the time to share with you highlights of their thoughts and recollections of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Most stated that if they could do it again they would.

Tara Williams, one month in Kuwait, one month in Baghdad. Worked with Ministry of Irrigation.

"The thing that I've focused on the most is how I've got to come home and enjoyed wonderful, pleasant living conditions here in America where everything's a little bit more peaceful and I'm not hearing generators run all of the time and helicopters flying overhead and gunfire…constant and consistent in the background."

"I think a lot about the soldiers who are over there with rising temperatures wearing their full gear, their uniform, their boots and their helmets and what they're doing for our country. I think that's something that needs to be appreciated."

"I know someone from my hometown that went over there and celebrated his 19th birthday. It's hard to think about all these guys who are so young in such threatening situations. Hopefully they'll get to come back soon and experience a lot more of their lives."

"Before I went over to Iraq I looked at [women's situation there] as something oppressive, and I just felt bad for the women. But after interacting with the Muslim women they told me that they chose to cover their heads because I always thought that the men had forced that upon them. For the most part it's their decision. If they do marry a man their husband asks them to cover their head, of course that's why they cover…when I realized it was their tradition and they appreciated doing it I had no problems showing respect."

"I always thought of myself as a go getter, but being over there really made me become that. If I need something I just go get it. I don't sit back and say. 'Well, I need that.' I learned to get things done for myself. So, I feel much stronger and a lot more confidant and I feel like that's something I can bring back to my job."

Eugene Tickner Senior Civilian, Chief of Party

"Although it was challenging and quite often frustrating experience, being the first team on the ground, and having to reshape the mission objective as well as try to build the team necessary to accomplish the mission, it was still a lot of fun. I have good feelings of what we accomplished."

"We actually went in to a situation where we were not welcomed by our potential customers. They did not want to do business with us at first, but as those wrinkles were ironed out, and as we began having interpersonal relationships with them, that changed. Pretty soon they were glad to talk with us and looked forward to our advice."

John Hazelton prepares to check a pump water supply station in Basrah.

Chris Frabotta and John Hazelton confer with members of the Ministry of Irrigation in An Nasiriyah.

Hasan Pourtaheri Shadow Minister of Irrigation. Originally from Iran, this was his first time back to the area in nearly 30 years.

"Enjoying all of the democracy that we have here and going back to that area it was quite an experience. And then you look at the government; here the government is transparent and everything is run by the people. Over there everything is totally different. The Iraqis just get some budget from the oil and then they tell the various ministries who will work for you. It was quite difficult for us to understand because they were always told what to do, how to do it. I was surprised. I think most of the departments, they did not have human resources, contracting…you know, it's totally different running a country under a dictatorship. We tried to establish the democratic government over there so that everything is open.

"The educated people like democracy, they really open their arms and they accept everything. The people who are not educated, they are very innocent people. They are manipulated. There were people who tried to control them and try to use them."

"What impressed me was the security that we had and the way the soldiers handled themselves. They were like diplomats; they had their life on the line and they were very diplomatic with the local people. People always came up to them with their problems and they were polite and showed friendly gestures."

John Hazelton, General civil engineering duties in Iraq and Kuwait.

"You're actually a part of the Army. I had to follow the same rules, eat the same food. You really got to work with soldiers first hand. I was amazed about how the Marines and Army troops were fighting one week and working with Iraqi engineers and city officials the next week. It got to the point of where the Iraqis were inviting soldiers to their homes. I don't think enough credit was given to soldiers for getting utilities up and running immediately after hostilities."

"I wouldn't mind going back."

Phil Kadala, General civil engineering duties.

"So much of the damage we saw was not war damage. It was looting. You'd go by a school, municipal buildings, anything that would be left alone that people didn't live in. If someone didn't live in it, it would be looted…looting to the point where they took window frames away. Not just glass. The entire window frame would be chipped away from the walls. Wiring, everything that could be pulled off…doors. If you could pull it off a building it was gone. I saw pictures of damage to transformer stations where people took the transformers, ripped them apart and used the box to burn insulation wires. Looters destroyed the power grid to get wire to sell. There were stories of people going in there taking these high transmission towers and cutting away to get the copper."

"Some of the folks I talked to who were involved with the electric infrastructure said they had seen more damage after hostilities stopped than before that were caused by the war."

Hasan Pourtaheri, center, helps allocate mounds of money to be used as payroll for 18,000 members of the Ministry of Irrigation.

Ranger Trading Cards Spread Water Safety Message

Rangers at W. Kerr Scott Lake in Wilkesboro, NC are using a new tactic to encourage young people to learn more about water safety.

Running through Labor Day, children can collect 16 different trading cards from Corps employees. In the process, they learn principles concerning water safety that will stay with them into adulthood. Each card actually has a water safety message printed on the back.

Everyone at Scott is interested in promoting water safety. The suggestion from this program actually came from sharing ideas at a recent ranger conference.

The trading cards are not simply handed to the children; they must demonstrate that they understand the water safety message associated with each card before it is awarded. When they want to redeem their cards, children simply go to the Visitor Assistance Center and let the receptionist know they are ready to collect. Each card can only be used once and is initialed so it can be determined whether it has been used already.

"We are always looking for innovative ideas to promote our water safety message. This seemed like a natural. Visitors actually seeking out a ranger for their trading card provide the ranger with a golden opportunity to pass on a safety message. It's usually the other way around so this is unique" said Operations Manger Terry Ramsey.

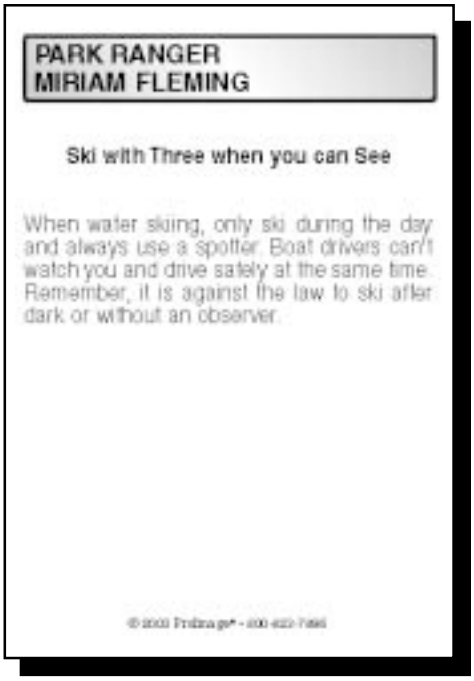
As an added bonus, children are awarded prizes based on the number of cards collected. Community participation is an integral part of the water safety initiative. Local businesses have generously donated prizes. "We are very happy to have the support of our local community. Businesses such as Kohl's and Wal-Mart donated items such as swim goggles, life jackets, and gift certificates," said Miriam Fleming, Outreach Park Ranger. "We are especially pleased to have the support of Paramount's Carowinds who provided discount coupons for our grand prize winners." Grand Prizes are awarded to children who collect all 16 cards. These discount coupons will save parents almost $70 on admission for four into the theme park.

The program has been more successful than anticipated. Children eagerly seek out the cards flagging down ranger vehicles and even going so far as to drag their parents away from the lake to collect cards only available at the Visitor Assistance Center. Yes, even our field- office assistant and IM co-op's each have their cards.

Ed Snyder, a 30 year park ranger veteran, has even developed a fan club. He recently received a poster designed especially for him by some teen campers who had their parents take them to a local store in order to buy the required supplies. Children have also been spotted outside the Bandit's Roost gate house chanting, "We Want Ed! We Want Ed!"

With this much early success, we hope W. Kerr Scott will enjoy many years of accident free recreation. Next time you see one of the W. Kerr Scott staff ask them for their card - they might even be willing to autograph it!

– By Miriam Fleming
(Outreach Ranger)



Special Emphasis Program Training Yields Insights and Ideas

From clarification of purpose to news you can use, the recent training session on the Special Emphasis Programs held in June gave district Team members a lot of information they considered important. About 25 people attended the training, including at least one Corps member from Jacksonville District and government employees from as far away as Alaska.

Here's what some of our folks had to say about their experiences:

"The instructors were great, gave me real insight into the Special Emphasis Programs and how it should work in our district. Also was good to hear from other classmates how things work at their worksites."

– Sherry Gaylor, Small Business Programs Coordinator

"As the Union President, I learned that the Equal Employment Office could at times work with the Union to resolve issues of EEO. As an EEO Committee member, I learn that being a Special Emphasis Program Manager does not mean being just a social director, and that your program is not effective if all you do is conduct special observances. It is a year round commitment in making sure everyone – especially managers – are aware of their responsibilities, that they are knowledgeable of statutes, laws, and directives governing EEO, and that they understand the Organization's Mission and Personnel Management System. It means to achieve the SEPM goals by overcoming barriers by getting management to buy in, making sure there is training, develop an action plan and publicize your accomplishments."

"This class made us do some soul searching to see how some of our values, attitudes, and beliefs affect the people around us. We learn that we cannot always change the beliefs and attitudes of those around us, but we can change the way we think and act."

– Diane Boswell, President, AFGE Chapter 0406

I learned several things, one really important to me since I am the Disabled Employee Special Emphasis Program Manager. There is a government program called "CAP" that provides equipment for the disabled to help them do their jobs with more ease. They have items like special phones for the deaf, voice activated computers and phones for those who have trouble using their hands, and so forth. I thought this was so great, I'm trying to get them to do a program demonstration in October (Disability Month) to show supervisors and managers that they can hire disabled people and get the equipment they would need to do their jobs at no cost to the Corps. We will also behaving an awareness day during October. We will ask people to use crutches, wheelchairs, and so forth for half a day, and at a lunch and learn have them tell about the experiences they had and the problems they ran into and how they overcame them. Plus, I am hoping to have a few of our own employees with disabilities comment on the everyday things they have to go through.

– John Edge, Special Emphasis Program Manager

"I think that through sharing our own personal discriminatory experiences with the group, we were able to better understand issues that feed into the entire EEO program."

– Rosemary Cohen, EEO Counselor

WebsiteHighlights@janwutkowski.wdn

What do snakes, jobs, video games, and "microengines" have in common? And what IS a "microengine" anyway?

These topics and more are discussed on the highlighted websites for this issue. Be sure to go to the Technical Library's website at http://www.saw.usace.army.mil/library/bulletin-board.htm to easily click over and see how sites from our own North Carolina backyard to our Canadian neighbors might be of use and interest at work and at home.

Web-Enabled Scientific Services & Applications

http://www.wessa.net/

A wide variety of free online utilities are offered, including data and equation plotting, regression analysis, and scientific forecasting. The applications' interfaces are very straightforward, and many options are available for users to input their data and customize the desired output.

CME 2003: The Centennial of the Canadian Military Engineers [pdf]

http://www.cme-2003-gmc.org/herit/arch_e.htm

2003 marks the 100th anniversary of the Canadian Military Engineers. As part of the Web site honoring their century of service, the Heritage Archive contains over 50 stories documenting some of the remarkable achievements made over the years.

Complete Sun and Moon Data for One Day

http://aa.usno.navy.mil/data/docs/RS_OneDay.html

US Naval Observatory's Astronomical Applications Department's site allows users to obtain the times of sunrise, sunset, moonrise, moonset, transits of the Sun and Moon, the beginning and end of civil twilight, and information on the Moon's phase, by simply typing in a city or town name or latitude and longitude in degrees and minutes. Easy to use and helpful.

Tides Online

http://tidesonline.nos.noaa.gov/

Tides Online is a continually updated database of tidal information maintained by NOAA's Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services. Choose the State Maps page where users can choose a state and then the station in which they are interested.Those interested in further information can click on the Data Listing link to view the complete records.

Thanks to Rachel Thompson and Marilyn Knowlton for submitting two sites included here. If you have a site you'd like others to know about, please send an email or call and I'll consider it for a future review. And thanks, too, for all the positive feedback from the initial column.

Venomous Snakes of North Carolina [pdf]

http://www.naturalsciences.org/research/herpetology/Venomous_Snakes_of_NC.pdf

The North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences offers this downloadable guide to the state's six species of venomous snakes. This well-illustrated 19-page guide includes an identification key, natural history and conservation information for each species, and a small sidebar on snakebite treatment.

Federal Government Student Jobs

http://www.studentjobs.gov/e-scholar.htm

Provides all students (high school and higher), parents, and career professionals information on different educational opportunities offered by Federal Government departments and agencies, or partnering organizations.

Microengines: The Batteries of the Future [Windows Media Player]

http://www.research-tv.co.uk/nano_story_template.html

Researchers at the University of Birmingham School of Engineering have developed microengines, a breakthrough in nanotechnology that has the potential to eventually replace the conventional battery. This short video summarizes the characteristics and uses for this remarkable innovation which has "over 300 times more energy than an ordinary battery, and are much lighter and smaller."

NetSeminar Services

http://webevents.broadcast.com/cmp/wcs/

The Web site serves as a hub for Webcasts (generally 60-90 minutes) delivered by a multitude of prominent companies, including Texas Instruments, Intel, and IBM. Upcoming Events lists the live seminars scheduled for the week. Archived seminars also available.

Federal Employee Education and Assistance Fund

http://www.feea.org

Private organization that provides not only educational benefits but emergency assistance to civilian federal and postal employees and their dependents. Applications are available online in .pdf format.

One For Fun!

Mimesis [pdf]

http://mimesis.csc.ncsu.edu/

As part of the North Carolina State University Department of Computer Science, Mimesis is a project that "explores the use of computer game engines...as test-beds for research in artificial intelligence, interactive entertainment and educational software." A detailed overview of the Mimesis system architecture can be found on its homepage, as well as a few examples of virtual worlds created with the system that demonstrates different application areas to which it can be applied. A large collection of recent research papers are available for public access.

Corps Family News

Rebecca Lee Alsmeyer was born to **Eric Alsmeyer** of the Raleigh Regulatory field office, and his wife Barbara, on Monday, July 7th at 12:32 AM. She weighed eight pounds, 15 ounces. Her big sisters are Rachel, 12 and Emily, 10.

Maranda Hallman, Security, gave birth to baby girl Nevaeh, pictured below. She weighed six-pounds, 11 ounces and was born on Tuesday, the 29th of July.

Retiree **Carolyn Northern**, formerly of Contracting Division and her husband Willie Northern are the proud grandparents of baby girl " Casseah E. Northern", born July 13, 2003, at 5:06 PM weighing in at 7 lbs 6 oz.

Small Business Office's **Sherry Gaylor's** sons returned from extended duty in Iraq and have reported to their new duty stations. Chief Warrant Officer 3 David Bassili and his family reported to Fort Hood Texas, and Technical Sergeant Joseph Bassili and his family reported to Seymour Johnson Airbase in Goldsboro, NC.

Emmily Morgan Tickner, daughter of Robin and **Eugene**, graduated with a degree in Occupational Therapy from Louisiana State University in New Orleans on Saturday, 9 August - her 24th birthday. Robin, Eugene, her sister Kelly and her "uncle" Don Carmen traveled to New Orleans for the celebrations.

Andrea Claybrook, daughter of **Linda S. Andrews**, Contracting, moved with her husband, Lt Chris Claybrook, and son, Garett Claybrook, to his new assignment in Pensacola Florida. He will be an instructor at the Navy Base there. They were previously stationed at Norfolk Naval Air Station.

Congratulations and warm wishes from the entire district to our commander, **Colonel Ray Alexander, Jr.**, on his engagement to Colonel Jettaka M. Signaigo who's currently assigned in Germany. No wedding date has been announced.

Nevaeh Hallman

Reaching Out

Frank Snipes and **Liz Vallery**, Planning Services Section, attended a meeting of the Topsail Beach Shore Protection Committee at the Town of Topsail Beach, NC. Snipes made a presentation on the economic analysis of storm damage and shore protection benefits to the committee.

Carmen Boyette of Jordan Lake presented a water safety program to 18 children and adults from Lemon Springs United Methodist Church at Ebenezer Church Swim Beach on July 1. She also spoke on OPEN/net July 15th to talk with state experts about Swimming Safety & Drowning Prevention in North Carolina.

Michael Shott and **Susan Lane** of Jordan Lake presented a water safety program about life jackets and safe swimming to 10 children and adults at Ebenezer swim beach on July 5.

Jordan Lake's **Francis Ferrell** presented an interpretive program about bald eagles at Ebenezer Church swim beach to twenty people on July 6.

Regulatory's **Ken Jolly** participated as a panel member during the EPA/DOJ/CORPS National CWA 404 Enforcement Conference in Washington, DC, 8-10 July 2003. The panel addressed "Adjusting to Diminishing Fiscal Resources." He provided a presentation regarding the existing, programmatic general permit between Wilmington District and the NC Division of Coastal Management for construction activities occurring in the 20 coastal counties of North Carolina.

Philpott Lake Park Ranger **Chris Powell** and the Philpott Fairystone Safety Council were able to purchase twenty fishing rods and tackle boxes loaded with the basics to get children of all ages hooked on fishing. The fishing tackle was available free of charge at Philpott Lake, Fairystone State Park, the Blue Ridge Regional Library in Bassett.

Mary Gardner, **Daniel Brown**, **Richard Wigley** and **Susan Traxel** of Philpott had a water-safety outreach with children (pictured top left) who attended the Piedmont Community Services Day Camp at Fairy Stone State Park. Traxel presented a water safety program about the importance of wearing personal flotation devices and if someone gets into trouble in the water to use the "Reach, Throw, Row, Don't Go" rescue techniques.

From Kerr Lake: **Beth Huffines** led the Kerr Buggs Island Safety Council meeting at Kerr, with 5 attending. **Dianne Edwardson** and **Robert Dennis** presented an overview of Corps mission and management objectives to 30 participants in the Vance County Leadership program. Beth led the group on a tour of the Joseph S.J. Tanner, II Center and Leon "Buddy" Sikes led the group on a tour of Kerr Powerhouse..

Judy Elliot presented environmental education program on snakes and the food chain to 15 at the Tanner Center.

Sherrie Storm led 75 girls on a three-mile nature hike. The girls were with a regional group from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. She also presented an evening program on legends of Kerr Lake to 12 people at the Tanner Center.

Retiree News

Eric and Betty Matzke went to San Jose, CA the second week in June to attend the high school graduation of their twin granddaughters, Kathy and Karen. Oh yes, Eric managed to squeeze in a train ride from Felton Santa Cruz, CA before coming home.

Dorothy Everett brought along her son, Thomas, as her driver, something about not being able to drive in all the traffic.

It was good to have Gloria Woodbury back with us. Paul is due back home from Indonesia today. By the way Paul graduated once again with Masters #3. Gloria posed the question, "Will he write the book now?" She has been waiting a pretty while now.

Gus Moore is back in the restoration business with an old two-story home, 50 years old - (not lived in for ablout 12 years). Pretty good project for a nearly 70 year old. The house is located in Waxhaw, NC on 7.47 acres of land, built by Dr. Daily, MD. A point of interest Waxhaw is the home of President Andrew Jackson, only giving you the info as given to me. Gus had to boast just a little in that he has a new grand-daughter , Amy's second baby girl, born on June 3rd.

Bettye and Bob Swart had a very good two-week trip while visiting various members of their family from Alabama to Texas and back to Georgia.

Philpott Lake and Dam

50th Anniversary

Celebration

Saturday, September 13, 2003

Beginning at 11 a.m.

Join us in Philpott Park – Bassett, VA

Dam Tours • Exhibitors
Master Ceremony • Entertainment

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